



EXAMPLE

BRIDGING WORKSHEET

The following worksheet illustrates how to prepare for media interviews when a reporter or interviewer asks questions that divert you from your primary message. By practicing in advance for such situations, you will be prepared to stay on message regardless of the questions asked.

EXAMPLES FROM A COMPLETED MINUS-PLUS WORKSHEET:		
Minus (-) Column	Bridging Phrase	Plus (+) Column
Questions a reporter may ask that, could divert you from your message.	See bridging term examples.	Message points you want to make in response to off-topic questions.
County residents have many reasons why they don't want their neighborhood annexed by the city starting with increased taxes. Isn't the city fighting an uphill battle here?	I think that once residents have things in perspective they'll be on board...	Many of the benefits of annexation have been overlooked. One of the biggest improvements will be... <i>(mention specific benefits that a majority of residents, if possible, would support).</i>
Won't an urban growth boundary cause the price of housing in the area to increase? How can you control development in a free-market economy?	The fact is...	Long-term planning and building more compact communities can result in significant savings for our community in the long run. They can help keep development and related costs lower because roads, utilities, schools and other infrastructure and services may be already in place. Or, if these services need to be upgraded as a result of development within the growth area, such upgrading may be less expensive than having to provide new but duplicative services in areas outside of the growth area.
Developers who are opposed to the building moratorium say it will hurt the local economy and put people out of jobs. Isn't that true?	Let me help set the record straight...	The moratorium will... <i>(provide a benefits-oriented message point).</i>
What do you say to city council members who are opposed to the plan?	What is important for them and the voters they represent to understand is...	Through planning we can offer better choices and great opportunities for where and how we work and live tomorrow. The plan can help our elected officials make informed decisions based on careful analysis and reasoning. For instance... <i>(mention a local example here).</i>
Those living in certain neighborhoods identified in the plan don't want increased density, yet the plan approved by the council recommends that density increase in those neighborhoods over time. How do you win residents over to your view?	I think it is important for everyone to step back and take a broader view...	The neighborhoods discussed in the plan are facing several important issues because of changes and development going on around these neighborhoods. The plan enables us to address some of these changes in a way that provides benefits for everyone – existing residents and property owners as well as those moving into the area. For example, look at what is going on at... <i>(provide a local example).</i>